



PG: 72-45

Harmony Memorial Park

7051-7101 Sheriff Road
Landover

Harmony Memorial Park is a very large cemetery for African Americans, with approximately 64,000 graves. The Columbian Harmony Society was founded in 1825 in Washington, D.C., by a group of free Negroes, with its major objective to establish a dignified burial place for blacks. In 1829 the Society purchased a tract of seven lots at 5th Street and Boundary Street (now Florida Avenue) in the District of Columbia. The cemetery which the Society established there was known as "Harmonieon." In 1859 it was moved to a new site on Rhode Island Avenue, and the name was changed to "Harmony Cemetery." The Rhode Island Avenue site was used for another century, at which time the cemetery was filled almost to capacity, and the Society began to look into other sites. Louis H. Bell, a Maryland real estate investor, offered land on Sheriff Road, and his proposal was accepted in 1959.

In May 1960 the Society began the five-month process of removal and reinterment of 37,000 graves to the new site, reported to have been one of the largest cemetery moves in history. Although originated for the use of African Americans, the Harmony Cemeteries have interred persons of many races, religions and nationalities. Harmony Memorial Park now has a generous perpetual care fund to ensure its beauty and upkeep forever. The Columbian Harmony Society, which established the original cemetery, continues its operations, not only in regard to the cemetery but also in research and publication on subjects of African-American interest.

(See FRR PrGe 17)
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